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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 001929

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [AEMR](#) [AMGT](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [CVIS](#) [EFIN](#) [ETRD](#) [IZ](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: TFI201: AMMAN SITREP 22 (4/01 1200 LOCAL)

REF: A. (A) FBIS GMP20030331000233

[1](#)B. (B) FBIS GMP20030331000231

[1](#)C. (C) AMMAN 1898

Classified By: DCM Gregory L. Berry for reasons 1.5 (B)(D).

General Overview

[1](#)1. (C) The Embassy is operating on a normal schedule April 1. Consular services are open. Activities at the American Language Center remain suspended, and there is only restricted activity by FSN's at the Peace Corps office. Movements of American staff remain restricted.

Consular Issues

[1](#)2. (C) The Embassy received information from the Department that a group of 13 Amcit peace activists affiliated with the group "Voices in the Wilderness" would be departing Baghdad for Amman on the morning of April 1 via three minibuses. This information has been passed to Task Force West (TF-W) in the Embassy.

GOJ Actions/Statements

[1](#)3. (U) King Abdullah and Queen Rania offered condolences March 31 to the families of the five Jordanians killed in two separate incidents in Iraq. All Jordanian dailies provided page one, above the fold, coverage of this event in their April 1 editions. According to the official press reports, the King "reiterated Jordan's rejection of the war on Iraq and his deep concern for the fate of innocent civilians -- the victims of the ongoing war."

[1](#)4. (U) In response to press reports that British troops had discovered an arms cache near Basra marked "Jordan Armed Forces, the government-affiliated Jordan Times April 1 quoted Minister of Information Mohammed al-Adwan as saying "we cannot confirm that this information is accurate. And if any old stocks are found, they certainly date back to the period when there was no embargo on Iraq and consequently no embargo on shipments of military equipment."

[1](#)5. (U) The Jordanian Arabic daily al-Arab al-Yawm reported in its March 31 edition an interview by FM Muasher with the al-Arabia Satellite television station in which Muasher reiterated again publicly that "Jordanian airspace is not open to U.S. aircraft" and reaffirmed that "the presence of U.S. forces in Jordan is for training and defense purposes and that Jordan would not be a platform for launching any attacks from its territory against Iraq." Muasher also asserted that "contacts between the Jordanian and Iraqi governments are continuing" pointing to the "230 Jordanian trucks carrying goods and medicines that have gone to Baghdad since the start of military operations." Muasher stated as well that Jordanian elections "would be held on the date the government has fixed." (ref A)

[1](#)6. (C) The Jordanian Arabic daily al-Dustur reported that an unnamed Iraqi diplomat told the paper that "his country started to supply Jordan once again with crude oil and fuel oil as of yesterday after resolving technicalities that had prevented the loading of Jordanian oil tankers." The Iraqi diplomat claimed that "a number of Jordanian oil tankers arrived at an oil and fuel loading point west of Baghdad yesterday and were loaded as usual." (ref B) It should be noted that the assertion of the quoted Iraqi diplomat runs counter to the information the Ambassador received from Minister of Information Mohammed al-Adwan in a private conversation March 30, in which al-Adwan said that seven Jordanian oil tank trucks had been dispatched to Iraq but had returned to Jordan empty and that Jordan would make no further attempts to import Iraqi crude. (ref C) The Foreign Minister assured the Ambassador on April 1, that he would watch carefully any developments in this issue; he knew of no new plans to lift Iraqi crude and would alert the Ambassador should he hear otherwise. "There will be no surprises."

Security

17. (C) No new issues.

Economic and Trade Developments

18. (C) No new issues.

Refugee/Humanitarian Issues

19. (SBU) The Jordan-Iraq border remains open. UNHCR reports that six TCNs crossed into Jordan from Iraq overnight March 31/April 1 and one person with document problems remains in no-man's land at the border. Separately, IOM officials asked refcoord to postpone today's planned monitoring trip to the Ruweished transit camp. Refcoord will report details septel.

110. (C) According to UNHCR, Reuters carried a news report overnight that US military forces had taken over the Iraqi side of the Trebil border crossing into Jordan. GOJ border officials told UNHCR this morning that Iraqi officials remained in control of the Iraqi side of the border crossing but that US military forces "possibly" could be 60 km from the border crossing.

Press

11. (U) No new issues.

GNEHM